

# ***PRESS RELEASE***

STATE SENATOR DAN CLEMENS – 20<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT



Room 418, State Capitol  
Jefferson City, Mo 65101  
Phone: 573-751-4008 Fax: 573-751-4096  
Email: dan\_clemens@senate.state.mo.us



Missouri Senate

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 18, 2004**

## **Weekly Capitol Report**

JEFFERSON CITY – Back in January I mailed out a survey to District 20 residents to get feedback on issues being discussed this session at the Capitol. It's March now, debate in Jefferson City is hot and heavy, and the surveys have come back into my office. So now is the perfect time to unveil the results.

I asked you to share your opinion on the performance of national and state officials in public office. As expected, your responses were along the same line as my own personal beliefs.

Over sixty percent of people who responded agreed that President Bush's leadership performance was very good, and that he is leading this nation in the right direction. With terrorism running rampant in the world, seen on Monday in Madrid where over 190 innocent people lost their lives, President Bush is doing his best to protect our nation from terrorism. It has not been an easy-going administration, but the best leaders don't present themselves at the debate table but appear in the face of great crisis and tragedy ready to hit the ground running with actions and not more questions.

Focusing on national leadership, U.S. Senator Kit Bond has focused his time and attention on bringing transportation dollars back to Missouri. Over half of my constituents who responded supported his efforts in helping Missourians get back on their feet. His efficiency in putting Missourians' transportation issues and needs in the forefront is commendable, and shows a big concern for Missouri's citizens and economy. Recently, Sen. Bond was here at the capitol receiving recognition for his Parents as Teachers program. Bond is rightly proud that the Parents as Teachers program began in Missouri during his second term as governor. The program, which recognizes the important role parents have as their children's first teachers, has spread to all 50

states. This program recognizes that the best way to help kids is to make sure they are well prepared before stepping foot in a kindergarten classroom.

With the 2004 survey I also tried to focus on state leadership. Missouri Secretary of State Matt Blunt also posted a positive showing as he continues his bid for the governorship. At an overwhelming approval rating of eighty percent, you have chosen your new leadership.

We are working hard to put Missouri citizens, especially our children, first. There are many issues debated, but we always focus on education. Sadly, there are those officials at the capitol that refuse to put children and education first. Contrary to his public statements Governor Holden is one such person, and with these survey results my constituents agree with me. At a seventy percent disapproval rate on the survey it is no wonder the citizens of Missouri are calling for new leadership.

Holden has always blamed Republican lawmakers for making cuts that “endanger the future of countless children.” In all honesty the governor withheld funds for our school children, and can blame no one but himself for hurting their education. To him I say, stop cutting their education, and support what I have long understood to be our legislative priority, to ensure that all children have the opportunities and services that will help them grow and become educated, responsible adults.

I believe that the governor needs to do more to help lawmakers address budget problems than merely calling for new taxes and blaming the legislature for education cuts.

For the third year in a row, the governor proposed a massive tax increase for Missourians. He is asking that Missourians pay more to state government, yet he has offered no specific solutions to the state's most pressing problems.

According to the survey, over half of the responses showed that a tax increase is not a possibility. All I want to know is how many times this issue has to come before the voters for the governor to finally understand that no one wants higher taxes.

Also seen in the survey is that seventy-five percent of you strongly support our efforts to try to allocate more funds from state government to education. We need to streamline more money from state agencies and services to schools and colleges across the state.

Another major issue that is being debated is tort reform. Over eighty percent of you believe that lawmakers should enact limits on the amounts juries can award in civil suits to help hold down the costs of medical services to patients and products to consumers.

It also comes as no surprise to me that the district supports Right to Carry, Southwest Missouri State name change, and supporting the less fortunate of our state with reasonable cost medical care.

Thanks to all of you who filled out and returned your survey to my office. I'll keep the results in mind when voting on and debating these issues in Jefferson City. And please don't hesitate to contact me any time with your opinions on these and other issues important to our families and state.

As always, I appreciate your opinion on any legislative matter. If you have any questions or concerns to share, please call me at 1-866-242-0810, or email me at [dan\\_clemens@senate.state.mo.us](mailto:dan_clemens@senate.state.mo.us).

- END -